

Message Text

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PFOR, FR, US
SUBJECT: LE MONDE COVERAGE OF GISCARD'S "IRRITATION"
CONCERNING EMBASSY-PCF CONTACTS.

REF: PARIS 9781

SUMMARY: SINCE PUBLICATION OF GOLDSBOROUGH ARTICLE IN
HERALD TRIBUNE (REFTEL) ON APRIL 4, FRENCH PRESS AS WELL
AS RADIO AND TELEVISION HAS GIVEN WIDE COVERAGE TO STORY.
MOST NOTABLY, LE MONDE CARRIED FRONT PAGE ARTICLE APRIL
6 TITLED "THE ELYSEE AND THE CONTACTS BETWEEN THE PCF
AND THE AMERICAN EMBASSY." HIGHLIGHTS OF STORY FOLLOW.
END SUMMARY.

1. CITING THE GOLDSBOROUGH ARTICLE AS SOURCE, LE MONDE
NOTES THAT STORY, WHILE NOT CONFIRMED BY ELYSEE,
HAS NOT BEEN DENIED BY EITHER FRENCH OR AMERICAN SPOKES-
MEN, THUS MAKING IT REASONABLE TO ASSUME THAT IT IS
TRUE, PARTICULARLY IN VIEW OF THE KANAPA STATEMENT OF
APRIL 4 CARRIED ON WIRESERVICES. LE MONDE SUMMARIZES
STATEMENTS OF EMBASSY SPOKESMEN WHICH CONFIRMED VISIT
BUT STATED THAT ONLY FOREIGN AFFAIRS PROBLEMS WERE DIS-
CUSSED AND THAT THE US REPRESENTATIVES DID NOT PUT FOR-
WARD ANY "LINE" OF THE NEW ADMINISTRATION.
SPOKESMEN ALSO SAID THAT SUCH MEETINGS WERE NOT NEW
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BECAUSE SUCH ENCOUNTERS WITH OPPOSITION PARTIES INCLUD-
ING THE COMMUNISTS HAVE TAKEN PLACE FOR YEARS.

2. ON PAGE TWO, LE MONDE GOES ON TO HYPOTHESIZE THAT IT
APPEARS THAT US DIPLOMATS WERE NOT ACTING ON INSTRUCTIONS
FROM WASHINGTON AND ADDS THAT IT IS NORMAL FOR ALL FOR-
EIGN MISSIONS IN FRANCE TO KEEP THEMSELVES INFORMED ON T

THE ACTIVITIES OF FRENCH POLITICAL PARTIES. RECALLING THAT PS LEADER MITTERRAND HAS LUNCHEDED SEVERAL TIMES WITH THE US AMBASSADOR, LE MONDE SAYS "ONE DOES NOT SEE WHY THE US WOULD NOT SEEK CONTACT WITH THE PCF AS IT HAS FOR YEARS WITH OTHER PARTIES, PARTICULARLY THE PS." THE ONLY NEW DEVELOPMENT IS THAT KANAPA THIS TIME AGREED TO THE MEETING AND AFTERWARDS GAVE IT A "CERTAIN PUBLICITY."

3. ACCORDING TO LE MONDE, PRESIDENT GISCARD D'ESTAING'S "IRRITATION" IS NOT WELL-FOUNDED, PARTICULARLY REGARDING HIS ALLEGED ARGUMENT THAT HE HAD REFUSED TO SEE GEORGE WALLACE AND HUBERT HUMPHREY WHILE THEY WERE ENGAGED IN ELECTORAL PRIMARIES. "THE ACTIVITY OF THE CHIEF OF STATE ON AN OFFICIAL VISIT IS ONE THING, THE ACTIVITIES OF HIS EMBASSY ARE ANOTHER: THE FRENCH EMBASSY IN WASHINGTON DID NOT AVOID, BUT ON THE CONTRARY, SOUGHT CONTACTS WITH THE CANDIDATE CARTER BEGINNING IN THE SUMMER 1976, WITHOUT AROUSING THE 'IRRITATION' OF PRESIDENT FORD."

4. LE MONDE FINISHES BY CALLING THE ATTITUDE OF THE PRESENT US ADMINISTRATION MUCH MORE DISCREET AND EVEN A LITTLE MORE OPEN THAN THAT OF THE KISSINGER ERA. EVEN THOUGH CURRENT US LEADERS CAN HARDLY FEEL MORE SYMPATHY TO THE PCF, THEY HAVE AT LEAST ABSTAINED FROM STATEMENTS WHICH COULD BE CONSIDERED INTERFERENCE IN THE FRENCH ELECTORAL PROCESS. "THE FUTURE WILL SHOW IF IT IS POSSIBLE TO MAINTAIN SUCH SILENCE CONCERNING FRANCE UNTIL MARCH 1978."

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5. LE MONDE ALSO REPORTED THE KANAPA STATEMENT ON PAGE TWO OF SAME ISSUE UNDER THE HEADLINE "THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIQUE INCITES A FOREIGN GOVERNMENT TO DISCRIMINATE AGAINST THE PCF."

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